

uncat  
spring  
lake

CONSERVATION AREA



## THE AREA

Spring Lake State Park and Conservation Area contains a large sand bluff overlooking a long, narrow lake. The area, in Tazewell County, is 25 miles southwest of Peoria on the east side of the Illinois River.

Spring Lake was described by a meander survey in 1840 and title was given to the State of Illinois. By court ruling beds of meandered lakes are owned by the State in trust for the people of the State. In 1950 the State made the initial land acquisition of 632 acres. The total acreage is now 1,946.

## THE LAKE

Spring Lake lies almost parallel to the Illinois River for 8.5 miles up the river bottoms along the base of the river's east bluff. The lake covers an area of 1,285 acres, has a maximum depth of 10 feet and has a shoreline of 18 miles.

The lake water level was raised by the construction of a higher dike. Spring Lake was expanded and completely filled by 1960. The new lake is nearly twice the size as the old Spring Lake and has also inundated another lake known as Saiwell Lake.

## HISTORY

Early residents of the Spring Lake area were the Illinois tribes of Indians. Designated as mound builders, the most noted tribes throughout the river valley at the time the French arrived included the Peoria, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Tamaroa and Michigamie. Driven out of the valley by around 1770, the remnants of these tribes ceded last claims to the area in 1833. White settlement of the Spring Lake valley area began around 1830.

Steamboats penetrated up the Illinois River to Peoria in 1829 and by the mid-1800's significant commerce developed along the river in commodities such as grain and meat. Spring Lake at that time became a feeder-type waterway joined to the river by a backwater slough.

The establishment of the Spring Lake Drainage and Levee District in 1903 resulted in the construction of a large dike around the bottoms containing Spring Lake, and boat access to the river was no longer possible. Therefore, the Drainage District was required to construct a



marine railway over the dike to accommodate water traffic. Legend has it that the railway was used only once and eventually fell into disrepair and was abandoned. Spring Lake was also used by shallow draft vessels for navigational purposes until about 1915.

## **FACILITIES**

**Picnicking:** There are two areas, one at the south end of the lake and one at the north end. Both have tables, outdoor stoves and drinking water. A concession stand, offering a variety of general refreshments, fishing bait and boat rentals is near the boat docks.

**Hunting:** Check with the ranger for game species (waterfowl hunting only) and hunting times and dates. There is a total of 1,285 huntable acres (lake only).

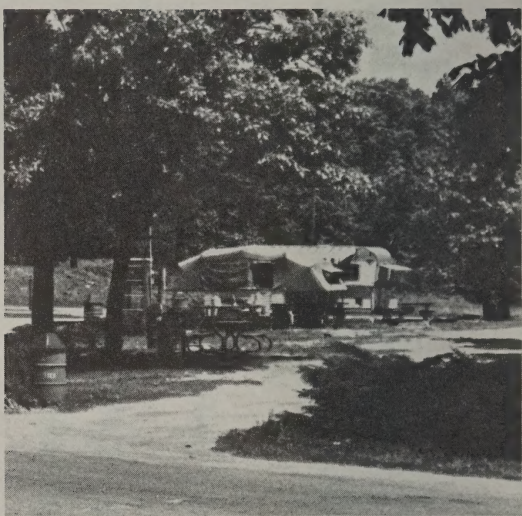
**Camping:** There are sites for both tents and trailers. Electricity and a trailer disposal station are also available. Group camping is permitted; all groups of over 25 persons need advance permission to enter the park. Upon arrival at the site, campers should obtain a permit from site personnel.

**Fishing and Boating:** The lake contains large-mouth bass, bluegill, sunfish, crappie, channel catfish, bullheads and carp. There are three launching ramps, several docks and boat rentals available. The motor limit is 10 horsepower.

**Hiking:** There is one trail, the Stage Coach Road Hiking Area, that is 1 $\frac{1}{4}$  miles long.

**Ice fishing:** Available in the winter when the weather conditions are favorable. Because of





springs, caution should be used by ice fishermen not familiar with the area.

### **Hunting Regulations**

1. All hunters using these areas must report to check station to fill out information cards and to turn in hunting licenses before proceeding to blinds.
2. Registered blind builders desiring to claim their blinds must report to check station one hour before opening shooting hour each day. Blinds not claimed by blind builders by this hour will be available for assignment on a drawing basis to other hunters until 8:00 a.m., central standard time.
3. Hunters must occupy blinds within one hour after registering at check station.
4. Upon vacating blind, hunters must report to check station within one hour. At this time ducks bagged will be checked and hunting licenses returned.

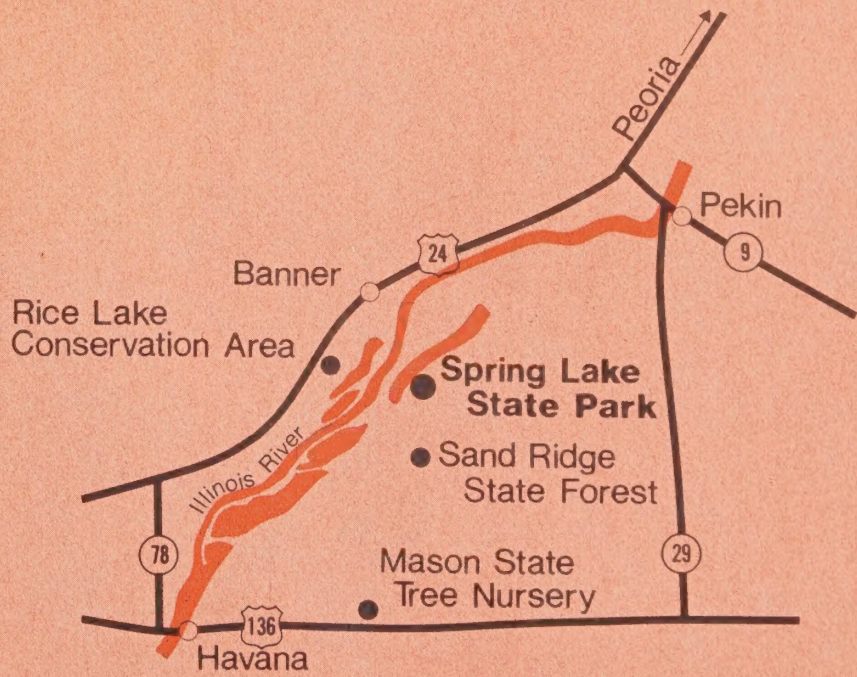
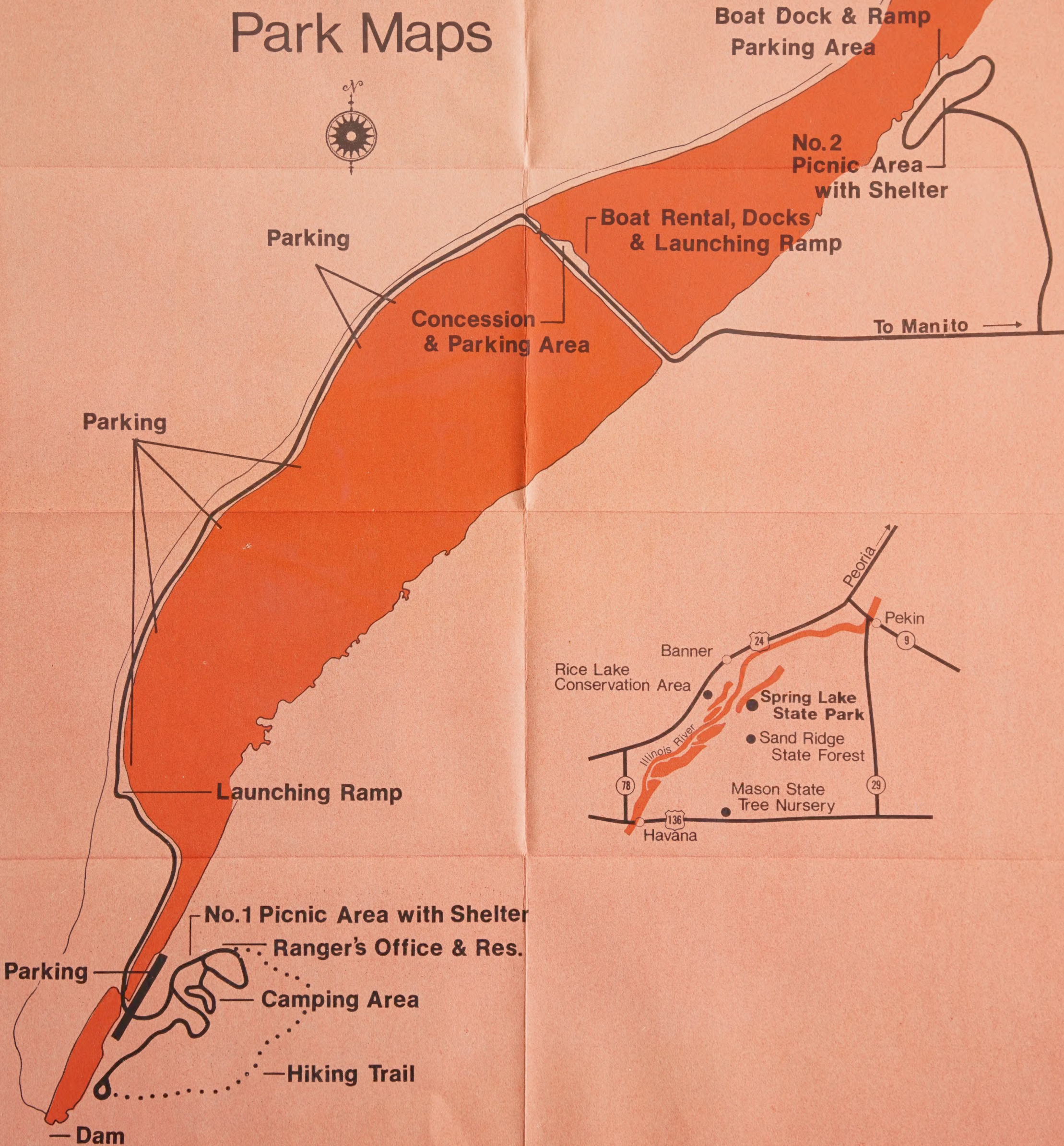
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### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION . . .**

For more details about this site, contact Ranger, R.R. 2, Manito, Illinois, 61546; phone 309/968-6197. For information on other Illinois sites, write the Department of Conservation, Information/Education Division, State Office Building, Springfield, Illinois, 62706.



# Park Maps







# Illinois Department of Conservation

life and land together

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